

**RELOCATE AMERICA
2009 SURVEY
RESPONSE FROM TRUMBULL, CONNECTICUT**

LOCAL ECONOMY

Idea Starters:

What is the attitude of residents about the local economy?

How do you promote economic stability/growth?

How do you encourage business? New Business?

What's on the horizon for growing your local economy?

The town of Trumbull is a healthy community that continues to preserve its sound and healthy economy. Although no community is untouched by current economic conditions, the town continues to hold an AA bond rating, a debt service remains at 7.5%, well below the 10% ceiling rating agencies recommend, and an unreserved-fund balance (or rainy-day fund) has grown from by over 245% in the last eight years.

Residents and businesses enjoy a very high quality of life, as noted by Connecticut Magazine as well as Money Magazine, for being among the best places to live. Nevertheless, town officials recognize that more people are strained by these challenging times, and it has actively taken steps to ensure the safety and comfort of residents who may be experiencing economic problems. The town offers programs for seniors, veterans, and people with disabilities to help reduce their tax burden through tax deferrals or tax credits. There are also programs to assist with heating oil payments to those in need.

Trumbull is the home of more than 1,400 business, with approximately 18,000 employed in town. Its business climate is very friendly, and businesses are embraced and supported in numerous ways. Trumbull's Economic Development Office, as well as its Chamber of Commerce and other Networking Organizations play an active role in connecting to organizations of all sizes to provide information and venues to help them do well. A new Business and Career Resource Center provides a wide variety of resources, workshops, guidance, hundreds of online linkages and materials to help job seekers, as well as facilitate business startup, development, and growth. In addition, there are more than 80 networking events available to businesses each year.

Trumbull's unemployment rate is well below state and national averages. Yet, the Business and Career Resource Center also helps people prepare for and find employment, as well as develop in their existing careers. In addition, numerous

workshops and programs have been offered to help prepare students, displaced workers, and other job seekers.

The town's strategic economic development plan is a working document designed to ensure Trumbull is focused on appropriate activities designed for business retention and attraction. The town continues to actively market the town and pursue selected industries and businesses. We are helping retailers drive consumer traffic to the shopping centers, and we are currently revitalizing our downtown center to make it more pedestrian-friendly and welcoming for visits to local merchants.

The Economic Development office continues to reach out, engage, and communicate with the business community. The town looks to proactively find ways to be of service and facilitate solutions with such concerns as transportation, workforce, or finance needs. The town's library, chamber of commerce, and various business groups are helping businesses learn, network, and find valuable tools and information. While others have taken a wait-and-see stance, Trumbull continues to be proactive and assertive in preserving and growing its economic base.

Economic growth requires a partnership between government and industry that provides prosperity for everyone involved in the transaction of business. Partnership is a focus and a theme for Trumbull government, community, and business.

HOUSING MARKET

Idea Starters:

Is there a wide variety in the styles of available housing?

What kind of mix in single family, condo, apt's, seniors?

Are housing values stable?

What is the proximity to schools, parks, and shopping, medical facilities?

Trumbull provides a wide availability of housing styles. Of the current roughly 200 Single family homes available in Trumbull all styles and price groups are well represented, from the 1930's Cape Cod or small ranch home with 2-3 bedrooms selling in the \$300,000 - \$400,000 range, all the way to the 4-5,000 square foot luxury Colonials built since the year 2000 with asking prices over \$1,000,000. There are also plenty of 2 bedroom condo's ranging from mid \$300,000 to low \$400,000. There is a healthy inventory of housing for senior citizens, about 7%, and numerous in-law houses. There are also several condo type affordable rentals and apartments in single- or multi-family homes in town.

The town is predominantly described as owner-occupied single-family home town, with over 11,000 Single Family homes on the tax rolls, but with the condo development of the past 15-20 years, the condo stock is now about 5.5% of the total. There are few multi family units, one major rental complex (Avalon Gates) and two major senior rentals. The condo's have all primarily been built since 1990, and include a wide mix of 2 bedroom ranches and townhouses. The more recent age restricted condos and PUDS (Planned Unit Developments) include Regency Meadow, Colonial Village and now Colonial Village 2 with asking prices there at about \$439K.

Housing values experienced strong appreciation from 2000 through 2005. In 2006 our single-family home median sale price was about the same as 2005, and in 2007 the median increased about 3%. The market did decline around 11% for the median price purchased, bringing us back to 2004 levels. However the market continues to attract qualified buyers. There seems to be a very low number of foreclosed and short sale properties compared to neighboring towns, and the market is considered much more stable compared to many other states.

A strong selling point for the Trumbull community is the proximity to services. Our own public schools consistently get top ratings and at the elementary level, the 6 schools are well distributed so each is almost a neighborhood school. Additionally, with Christian Heritage K-12, St Joseph's High School, and other private elementary schools, the choices are excellent. Fairfield University, Sacred Heart University, University of Bridgeport, and Housatonic College are all examples of nearby colleges.

We have a park system and open space that is the envy of many towns, two outdoor pools, numerous athletic and tot parks and now even a dog park (privately cared for I think). Two major shopping centers with major national retailers are within our borders and two major hospitals just minutes away.

EDUCATION:

Idea Starters:

How do you promote the value of education and learning?

What is the level of satisfaction in K-12 districts?

What kind of adult education, vocational opportunities are there?

As stated by the First Selectman in his recent address to the town, "Our students are magnificent, and so are our schools. Our High School students have been accepted at many of the nation's leading colleges and universities. Our band has been honored for the second time by playing at the inauguration of President Obama. Our athletic programs are first class, and our students are well prepared for any avenue they choose, be it college, work or the military. Along with public safety, education should be our first priority...so that our town, our

state and our nation will have the skills we'll need to meet the challenges of the 21st Century.”

Education is a core value in Trumbull. Evidence of this may be observed from numerous vantage points. More than 90% of our students graduate from high school, and go onto higher education. Class sizes continue to range between 18 and 24 students to ensure individual attention where needed. Schools are in excellent condition, and this year, we will start a significant High School renovation. Parent involvement is exceptionally high, the PTA membership is high and active at all levels, and communication between schools and home is continuous.

Trumbull's public library is an exceptionally active and utilizes specialized librarians and numerous programs focused specifically on children and teens, and making learning fun and interesting. The Library has recently published online programs that provide a wide range of preparation courses that lead to outstanding opportunities.

Recently, the Board of Education initiated a “Community Conversation” that brought together over 100 representatives of the community, including residents, parents, students, educators, government, and businesses, to start developing an action plan to address a town-wide partnership in helping students prepare and develop the skills needed for the 21st Century. The action plan is currently being worked on by participants of this event and other volunteers from the public. The action plan is expected to be finalized by the end of spring. One anticipated outcome is that all students and educators, in all levels of the education system will develop and be accountable for an annual learning plan that may incorporate social, emotional and academic skills. One objective of such a plan is to ensure that learning becomes a more automatic and continuous process, and that students become more self-motivated, inspired, and accountable for their learning.

The “Trumbull Business Education Initiative” is a somewhat unique organization that was established by the Board of Education more than 10 years ago as a viable partnership with Business, Education, Community and Town Government. It provides K to 12 students with an awareness of careers and an understanding of the business environment as they transition from the school environment. Its mission is to utilize the partnership to develop an environment in which all the students will acquire an understanding of the needs and requirements of the work world while guiding the student to an appreciation of these demands as they continue the development of their career.

- Improve the business community's understanding of the educational community
- Develop an improved understanding of the roles required of business and education to assure student career awareness and preparedness

- Assure that business requirements of the work skills and work habits are found in the curriculum
- Provide business and professional expertise to the educational community
- Develop a medium for informing, guiding, and motivating students about the career and work process
- Provide funding for such activities through the use of a tax-exempt foundation

Education in Trumbull extends well beyond the academics. Students may enroll in a variety of clubs and organizations, and continuing education programs to extend their learning and their skills. For example, extra-curricular programs offered through the school include all major sports, music, and arts, and programs designed to teach entrepreneurship, videography, robotics, debate, foreign languages, music, science, and journalism.

Approximately 7,000 students attend the Trumbull Schools. Public schools include a pre-school, six elementary schools, two middle schools, and a high school. The town also offers two unique regional high schools: The Agricultural and Biotechnology High School (with special programs affiliated with Yale), and the regional Performing Arts High School. In addition, the town hosts two private elementary schools, one private high school, and a private school for K-12.

Trumbull is ideally located within approximately 30 miles of six two-year colleges, eight colleges and universities, and 30 trade and vocational schools. Some examples include:

- UCONN,
- Fairfield University,
- Gateway Community College,
- Housatonic, Community College,
- Sacred Heart University,
- Southern Connecticut University,
- St. Vincent's College,
- University of Bridgeport,
- University of New Haven, and
- Yale University

ENVIRONMENTAL

Idea Starters:

What does your community do to improve the environment?

What are the plans to increase green space within your community?

What other "green" initiatives are there?

Bike Paths, Public Transportation?

Recycling Programs & water conservation?
Paperless Movement at city level?

Preserving our land and the environment is in very high priority for the town. Trumbull has more than 1,600 acres of preserved open and recreational space, which represents among the most reserved space per capita in the state. Each year, the residents, schools, and business community are involved in a "Tidy-up-Trumbull" event where teams of people get together to pick up debris or garbage found all around town. A large banner is placed across Main Street to encourage people to participate. Notices are sent out to schools and businesses, and information is placed in the newspaper as well.

Municipal Departments work with various scout troops who are earning badges, by assigning projects that help clean up the environment and improve paths.

Trumbull has a town-wide recycle program where all municipal and school buildings have multiple receptacles conveniently placed throughout each building. To encourage recycling, pertinent information is sent out annually to each place of residence and business. In addition, the town hosts an annual Hazardous Waste Day to educate the public, and residents from other towns are also invited.

Trumbull's Leaf program picks up all the leaves that are raked in the fall by residents. The leaves are left in piles at the edge of the street, where they can be picked up by trucks free-of-charge. They are then sent for recycle and compost.

The Public Works Department continuously explores ways to improve energy efficiency. For example, our newest schools have been designed with energy efficiencies, and all town building lights are on sensors and timers that are adjusted weekly as days get longer or shorter. Our newly remodeled Senior Center has been totally rewired for energy efficiency and conservation. Our Public Works Department adjusts the timers on the lights on a regular (often weekly) basis in the interest of energy efficiency. Further, the Public Works Department is currently exploring Wind Turbine and other sources of alternate energy.

The town's top engineer is a specialist in storm water management, and is leading the town's storm water management policy implementation. Each development project is carefully scrutinized to ensure minimal impact to the environment, protected water quality, and safety against flooding.

Trumbull's Nature Center presents year-round programs that are designed to help residents and visitors appreciate the environment, as well as understand ways to conserve, preserve, and protect it.

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Idea Starters:

What types of community wide events do you promote?

How do you encourage participation?

Describe your volunteer base. Is volunteerism encouraged?

Trumbull is a haven for entertainment and festivals held for its community.

The First Selectman's concert brings to town some of the biggest names in the music industry, including such names as Chicago, the Beach Boys, Creedence Clearwater Revival, KC and the Sunshine Band, and Kool and the Gang. Thousands of people gather each year for the concert at Indian Ledge, one of most beautiful open parks.

The Trumbull Arts Festival is held annually in September. It features music, arts, entertainment, from local artists, as well as excellent food.

Trumbull Day is held annually in June. All day long, residents and visitors enjoy music and entertainment, amusements, crafts and merchandise, and getting together with friends and families. At the end of the day, residents gather for a magnificent display of fireworks.

Every Tuesday evening in the summer, the town hall green hosts a free outdoor concert with a local band. Hundreds of residents gather for a relaxing and fun evening, enjoying the music and the sense of community.

Community and social involvement is pervasive in town with hundreds of clubs and organizations to connect with or join.

Volunteerism abounds in Trumbull, starting with the very young being encouraged to contribute their time through school projects and youth organizations. At the high school level, all students must volunteer their time and services to charitable and community causes for a minimum of 20 hours, and up to 60 hours each year as a requirement for graduation.

Various organizations, such as the Women's Club, Rotary Club, Swim-Across-The-Sound, or Lions Clubs, hold events that not only benefit the community, but also bring the community together for fun, work, and a common cause. The Pumpkin Run, which benefits the school's scholarship fund, involves hundreds of resident and business volunteers each Fall, as does Tidy-Up-Trumbull.

PARKS & RECREATION

Idea Starters:

What are the recreational facilities available within your community?

Hiking? Biking Trails?

What are some of the community sponsored programs for recreation?

Sports Leagues, Classes, Arts, Health & Fitness?

Outdoor recreational opportunities include the 18-hole Tashua Knoll's public golf course and the 9-hole, par-33 executive Tashua Glen public golf course, 20 recreational parks, more than 20 tennis courts, many lit for night play, basketball and volleyball courts, two public and two private natural swimming areas, one indoor and two outdoor swimming pools, two sprinkler park areas, a BMX bike track, hiking and bicycle trails, tot lots and playgrounds, and numerous lacrosse, baseball and soccer fields that are used by youth as well as adult recreational leagues.

Hikers and cyclists travel from all over the State to enjoy the beautiful miles of trails in Trumbull's Pequannock River Valley State Park.

Trumbull's active arts council sponsors cultural programs, and an annual arts festival, as well as free outdoor concerts throughout the summer. The town also has a nature and arts center, a town youth association, and a senior center. Neighboring towns offer a number of museums, theaters, concerts and major sporting events within a short driving distance.

CRIME AND SAFETY

Trumbull is viewed as one of the safest communities in the state. In fact, Money Magazine named Trumbull one of the Top 100 Places to live in 2007, and Money Magazine rated Trumbull an "A" for safety. The safety and well-being of all who live, work and visit are of the utmost importance to the community, and the town has a strong track record in this area. There are numerous programs offered by our Police, Fire, Emergency, and Health Departments, as well as in our school curriculum that are designed to ensure and support safety throughout the town.

Some of these programs include the following activities:

The Fire Department goes to all the elementary schools in the fall to provide a fire prevention program to all classes.

A safety day is conducted at the town's largest mall, and all the emergency services participate.

A safety class is provided by the Fire Department to the babysitters classes and offices around town to teach fire prevention.

Message Boards are posted in front of each fire house with various topical and seasonal fire prevention messages posted for the public to read.

All medical and emergency calls are responded to within two to five minutes.

Police Officers are all state certified MRT (medical response technicians)

All police vehicles are equipped with medical bags, oxygen, and AED (automatic external defibrillators). We have had several saves with the AED.

Community Affairs Police Officers runs the community affairs programs on many topics for the schools and the community, including identity theft, underage drinking, crimes against senior citizens, residential and commercial crime prevention, and other programs. Some of these programs are also televised on our Public Access Channel so that those at home may also benefit.

Youth officers/School resource officers provide regular contact with Board of Education Administrators and security officials for student.

Traffic Unit (Motorcycle cops) provides directed enforcement and attention to traffic-related problem areas, for complaint resolution. Public talks and educational events presented for traffic safety topics

The Trumbull Special Needs Assistance Program is designed for individuals or families of individuals in their home who have any type of special need, such as Alzheimer's, Autism, allergies, physical or emotional impairment. The member can be registered with the Police, EMS, and Fire units so that they may better serve their needs in the event they need to respond to a call.

Our specially certified Traffic Division installs child car seats

TPAUD – Trumbull Parents Against Underage Drinking – In 2006, the Trumbull Board of Education was awarded \$66,000 annually over three (3) years to study the issue and develop a community based, data driven action plan to address the issue on underage drinking. Trumbull is one of 29 Connecticut grantees to receive this competitive grant from the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) on behalf of the Office of the Governor. TPAUD has scheduled community meetings designed to provide parents with more information about underage drinking and ways to start having conversations with their children to set clear boundaries and limits to reduce the likelihood that they will become underage drinkers.

TPAUD is funding an anonymous text tip line which will be monitored by the Police Department. Anonymous tips can be sent via text message from a cell phone or a PC to the Police Department.

Neighborhood Watch Program - A Neighborhood Watch Program is one of the most effective answers to crime. Trumbull Police assist neighborhoods in setting up a program.

Child Passenger Safety -- The Trumbull Police Department offers car seat inspections as a public service to Town residents by appointment only. Police Officers in the Traffic Division, who are certified as Child Passenger Safety Technicians, perform this service.

REVERSE 911 – Community Notification System -- In the event of an emergency, Trumbull Emergency Services personnel can identify the affected area of Trumbull and record a message that describes the situation and recommends the protective actions residents should take. The Reverse 911 system will automatically call out to all listed telephone numbers within that geographic area and deliver the recorded message.

VISION

Idea Starters:

What is your vision for improving your community and the lives of the people living there?

The town offers excellent opportunities for both work and play. Trumbull residents have a strong sense of community spirit and pride, and enjoy their high quality of life. Residents are actively involved in preserving its land, the town's character, its financial strength, excellent education, a strong regard and care of the environment, and wonderful cultural, recreational, and social opportunities. The future of the town relies on a continued and even stronger partnership between government, residents, businesses, and community organizations in order to protect and preserve what has been so carefully created, and to enhance it further in offering even more cultural and entertainment options and increased community and economic development activities to ensure.

Our vision is a clean, safe, and thriving town whose residents enjoy progressive learning and educational activities, excellent employment, a broad range of outdoor and indoor recreational and cultural opportunities, and a continued spirit of community and partnership.

List any additional comments that you think we should know about your community:

As mentioned, Trumbull offers excellent opportunities for both work and play. Its residents have a strong sense of community spirit, pride, and service. They are

actively involved in preserving its land, the town's character, its financial strength, excellent education, a strong regard and care of the environment, and wonderful cultural, recreational, and social opportunities. We are continuously working toward the future of the town and a continued and even stronger partnership between government, residents, businesses, and community organizations in order to protect and preserve what has been so carefully created, and to enhance it further in offering even more cultural and recreational options, even more progressive learning environments, and increased community and economic development activities.